

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 01635 111538Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-08 IO-13 USIA-15 COME-00  
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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO FAS SUSDA WASHDC  
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2149  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 1635

FOR KOELLER, PPD, OGSM FROM AG ATTACHE

TOFAS 15

E.O. 11652: N/A  
SUBJECT: LEBANESE WHEAT AND RICE SITUATION

REF: (A) FASTO 19 (B) AIRCOMM DATED 2/14/77

1. COMPLETE INFORMATION ON LEBANESE WHEAT AND RICE PURCHASES AND 1977 IMPORTS IS UNAVAILABLE DIRECTLY FROM MINECONS CEREALS AND SUGAR BEETS OFFICE BECAUSE THIS OFFICE HAS NOT RESUMED SUPPLY ACTIVITIES FOR THESE COMMODITIES FOR THE ENTIRE COUNTRY AND SOME DEALS FOR 1977 DELIVERIES WERE NEGOTIATED PRIVATELY. AGATT HAS BEEN REVIEWING SITUATION AND IS ABLE TO PROVIDE FOLLOWING DATA WHICH IS BELIEVED TO BE COMPLETE AND ACCURATE.

2. WHEAT SITUATION. CEREALS OFFICE PURCHASED 150,000 MT CANADIAN CWRS NO 3 OR BETTER FOR DELIVERY STARTING END OF MAY THRU DECEMBER 1977. THIS IS A COMMERCIAL PURCHASE UNDER THE THREE YEAR BILATERAL AGREEMENT FOR 1973-1976. THE PRICE WAS REPORTEDLY FIXED IN MID 1976 AT ABOUT \$220 MT C&F FOR 1976 DELIVERY, BUT SHIPMENT WAS HELD UP BECAUSE OF CIVIL  
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DISTURBANCES WITH GOL REPORTEDLY EXTENDING L/C AND PICKING UP STORAGE COSTS BETWEEN ORIGINAL SHIPMENT DATES AND REVISED SHIPPING SCHEDULE. LEBANESE MERCHANT PURCHASED 40,000 MT BULGARIAN WHEAT AT ABOUT \$ 120 C&F OR MORE WHICH WAS IN TURN SOLD TO CEREALS OFFICE. FIRST SHIPMENT THIS WHEAT OF 15,000 MT ETA BEIRUT MARCH 10, WITH PRESUMABLY OTHER SHIPMENTS TO FOLLOW SOON. CEREALS OFFICE ARRANGING

FOR DELIVERY ASAP THE 15,000 MT US NO 2 HARD WINTER WHEAT PURCHASED COMMERCIALY IN LATE 1975 OR EARLY 1976 WHICH WAS OFF LOADED AT BUYERS COST IN ANTWERP BECAUSE OF DISTURBANCES. DIRECTOR OF PORT SILOS EXPECTING 23,000 MT WHEAT IN 1977, BUT ETA AND ORIGIN UNKNOWN. AGATT BELIEVES SOME OF THIS MAY BE REMAINDER OF 9,472 MT FOR WFP EXPECTED TO BE DELIVERED 1/1 TO 3/31/77. AGATT UNDERSTANDS BEIRUT PORT SILOS PRESENTLY CONTAIN ABOUT 2,000 MT OF WHEAT OR THREE DAYS MILLING REQUIREMENTS, BUT DOES NOT KNOW MILLERS STOCKS. BY MARCH 10 AN ESTIMATED 50 PERCENT OF THE 35,000 MT FLOUR IN STOCKS IN EARLY FEBRUARY MENTIONED REF (B) HAS BEEN UTILIZED.

3. RICE SUPPLY SITUATION REPORTED REF (B) WAS PARTIALLY CONFIRMED DURING SECOND NEGOTIATING SESSION ON PROPOSED TITLE I AGREEMENT. AT THAT SESSION GOL REPS STATED THAT FEB/MAR IMPORTS WOULD TOTAL 7,000 MT, LICENSES HAD BEEN ISSUED FOR ABOUT 5,000 MT AND ITALY WAS SUPPLYING AN ESTIMATED 7,500 MT. IN A UNDP DOCUMENT DATED 1/25/77 SENT TO EMBASSY BEIRUT GIVING BREAKDOWN OF COMMITED AND DELIVERED WFP COMMODITIES, NO REPEAT NO RICE IS MENTIONED. THEREFORE, AGATT CONCLUDES THAT MOST IF NOT ALL OF THE DONATED RICE MENTIONED REF (B) WILL BE ITALIAN ON DIRECT DONOR BASIS.

4. AGATT WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR LEGANESE WHEAT AND RICE SUPPLY SITUATION AND WILL ADVISE WHEN ADDITIONAL INFO BECOMES AVAILABLE. MURPHY

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## Message Attributes

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